

*Supply*

They are now looking at backing away from their extraordinary subsidization.

The Hon. Member asked what diversification would do. I have already mentioned in my speech what it has done for tourism. It will take us away from having only two boom and bust industries. Bill C-18 and Bill C-19, which the New Democratic Party opposes, will allow for the infrastructure to manufacture raw materials from the prairie regions to be enhanced. However, he opposes that. It is one way in which to develop a capacity for the western basin to produce its products.

It is rather naive to ask for the details on a document which is not yet before the public and on which we are still working. However, I can tell the Hon. Member that I do not have to go public to have my voice heard. I can, at regular meetings with the people who are drafting and writing this important legislation, make sure that western Canadian interests are being looked after. I see the Hon. Member for Calgary North (Mr. Gagnon) is here. He is playing an active part, as are other Alberta Members of Parliament.

I am thankful that we are not on the opposition side and that we can do hundreds and hundreds of things to make western Canada a better place to live, despite two terrible world conditions which have driven down the price of petroleum and the price of grain. There is a great day coming in oil. We have now been six weeks at \$19.50 per barrel. I say to the Hon. Member: "You just stick around".

**Mr. Binns:** Mr. Speaker, I was interested in the remarks of the Hon. Member for Crowfoot (Mr. Malone). He certainly enlightened us about the situation in western Canada, in particular the situation in Alberta.

He mentioned the National Energy Program which was brought in by the former Government and of course supported by the New Democratic Party. He also mentioned its effect upon western Canada. Perhaps he could take a moment to elaborate on some of its effects on the economy in western Canada, on the jobs that were lost, on what the Progressive Conservative Government did after taking office in relation to that program, and on the follow-up programs in the energy sector for western Canada.

**Mr. Malone:** Mr. Speaker, the National Energy Program was a job-creation program by the Liberals—it created jobs in the United States, Venezuela, the North Sea, and Australia. It drove Canadian drilling rigs out of Canada; two-thirds of them left within the period of a year.

There is a great misconception in Canada that a drilling rig is a tower. To move a drilling rig requires approximately 16 very long, 18-wheeler tandem trucks. Each move costs about \$500,000, yet three-quarters of our rigs were driven out of the sedimentary basin and headed for other countries. Head offices moved from Calgary to Denver, Colorado. One person who was a Member of Parliament moved many of his people

out. The environment in Canada was a losing environment, and it took \$56 billion out of western Canada.

Today Liberal and NDP Members stand and say that the provincial Government should do certain things. They ask why we as federal people do not do certain things for the west. The truth of the matter is that much of the damage which has taken place is the direct result of that terrible, awful, unjust, unfair, wrong-headed, and bull-headed policy, the National Energy Program. It treated western Canada differently from other parts of Canada. It treated one sector of the industry different from all other sectors. It sucked out from one sector just short of \$5 billion in taxation at one time. Now that figure is just a little over \$400 million for the same sector, because fairness has been put back into the game.

In response to the question of my good friend from Prince Edward Island, let me say that it was a devastating sight. Over a mile and a half of trucks were lined up from Coutts, Alberta, to Sweetgrass, Montana. They were heading for the United States and taking our men and women with them. Jobs were leaving the country. It was a devastating day. The great pretenders are the New Democrats who have the audacity to come to the House of Commons and say that they are sticking up for western Canada. What a façade, Mr. Speaker!

• (1640)

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski):** Questions and comments are now terminated. Debate. The Hon. Member for Cape Breton—The Sydneys (Mr. MacLellan).

**Mr. Russell MacLellan (Cape Breton—The Sydneys):** Mr. Speaker, it seems that the Government and the Conservatives, every time they are questioned about the lack of support for the energy industry in Alberta, always refer to the National Energy Program. Certainly the National Energy Program had some detrimental effects on the energy sector. That was evident in the last federal election, and the Liberal Government cannot be said to have done very well in Alberta. But now we are three years into the mandate of the present Government and it is still talking about the National Energy Program, trying to get Albertans off the track. This Government has not only not supported the energy sector in Alberta but it has completely ignored it.

There have been some programs, some of which have been noteworthy, but all of them have come far too late and all of them implemented only because of political necessity.

We are talking today about a province which has an unemployment rate of between 10 per cent and 11 per cent. Alberta Members can say that things are looking bright. I can say that with higher oil prices things are looking a little brighter, but it does not mean that Alberta is out of the woods by any means nor can we take for granted that the economy of Alberta will bounce back. An awful lot needs to be done.

I am very concerned when I hear government Members saying that things are looking brighter and that is their defence for ignoring the problems in Alberta. It is wrong also